

1.(Currently Amended) A slide pad device for a ladder having at least two ladder rails ~~that rest upon the ground, wherein said at least two ladder rails contact the ground with a first coefficient of friction, said slide pad device~~ comprising:

a slide pad base having a ~~hard, smooth bottom surface, wherein said bottom surface of said slide pad base has a second coefficient of friction that is less than said first coefficient of friction of said ladder rail; and~~

a receptacle structure extending upwardly from said slide pad base, wherein said receptacle structure receives and engages one of said ladder rails therein, thereby connecting said slide pad base to that ladder rail so that said slide pad base is interposed between the ladder rail and the ground when the ladder is erected on the ground.

2.(Original) The device according to Claim 1, wherein said receptacle structure includes a vertical support having flexible arms that extend from said vertical support.

3.(Original) The device according to Claim 2, further including a strap attached to said flexible arms for biasing said flexible arms toward each other.

4.(Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 1, wherein said receptacle structure includes a tubular elastic band that ~~surrounds is adapted to surround~~ a portion of a ladder rail, thereby ~~engaging that enabling said receptacle structure to engage the~~ ladder rail.

5.(Original) The device according to Claim 4, wherein a peripheral ridge extends upwardly

from said slide pad base and said tubular elastic band extends upwardly from said peripheral ridge.

6.(Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 1, wherein said receptacle structure includes fingers that extend upwardly from said slide pad base, wherein ~~the ladder rail passes between said fingers and~~ said fingers are adapted to engage the ladder rail by enabling a ladder rail to pass between said fingers.

7.(Original) The device according to Claim 6, further including at least one strap for biasing said fingers toward each other.

8.(Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 6, further including friction pads on said fingers, wherein said friction pads are adapted to contact a ladder rail when the ladder rail is positioned between said fingers.

9.(Original) The device according to Claim 6, further including sloped locking heads on said fingers.

10.(Original) The device according to Claim 1, wherein said bottom surface of said slide pad base has at least one curved edge.

11.(Original) The device according to Claim 1, whereon said slide pad base is metal.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of improving the mobility of a ladder, comprising the steps of:

providing a ladder having two parallel ladder rails, wherein each of said ladder rails has a bottom end that embodies a first coefficient of friction when resting upon the ground; and

attaching slide pads to said bottom end of each of said ladder rails so that said slide pads are interposed between said ladder rails and the ground, wherein said slide pads are affixed to said ladder rails and remain attached to said ladder rails when the ladder rails are lifted from the ground, and wherein each of said slide pads have a hard bottom surface that embodies a second coefficient of friction, when in contact with the ground, that is less than said first coefficient of friction.

13. (Original) The method according to Claim 12, wherein said step of attaching slide pads to said bottom end of each of said ladder rails includes advancing said bottom end of each ladder rail into a receptacle structure on each of said slide pads that engages said ladder rails.

14. (Original) The method according to Claim 12, wherein said step of attaching slide pads to said bottom end of each of said ladder rails includes advancing said bottom end of each ladder rail between fingers mounted on each of said slide pads, wherein the fingers engage said ladder rails.

15. (Original) The method according to Claim 12, wherein said bottom surfaces of said slide pads

have at least one curved edge.

17.(Original) The method according to Claim 12, whereon said ladder is a stepladder having two ladder rails and two support rails, wherein said slide pads are attached solely to said ladder rails.

19. (Currently Amended) A stepladder assembly, comprising:

a stepladder having two ladder rails and two support rails, wherein said ladder rails and said support rails each have bottom ends that contact the ground when said stepladder is erected;

slide pads coupled to said bottom ends of said ladder rails so that said slide pads are interposed between said bottom ends of said ladder rails and the ground when said stepladder is erected, said slide pads having a hard surface that contacts the ground and presents a lower coefficient of friction against the ground than said support rails.

20.(Original) The assembly according to Claim 19, wherein said slide pads are selectively detachable and reattachable to said ladder rails.